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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 004341

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: LEADING SHIA POLITICIAN SHAYKH HUMAM HAMMOUDI LAYS  
OUT STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL COMPACT

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY. Leading Shiite SCIRI member Shaykh Humam Hammoudi told the Ambassador November 23 that Iraq needs a structure that defines every party's goals and a system that works internally, regionally, and internationally. Within Iraq, he highlighted the positive role that the future Federation Council can play in protecting the interests of the Shia, Sunnis, and Kurds. He said Iraq's national parties and leaders need to endorse a unified Iraq that is not hostile to anyone with the goal of building a strong government that respects the Constitution and rule of law. He said this national compact could be the basis of a regional compact to bring in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey. Hammoudi promised to work on this initiative as quickly as possible. END SUMMARY

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National Compact on Basis of Unified, Democratic Iraq  
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[¶2.](#) (C) Leading SCIRI member Shaykh Humam Hammoudi told the Ambassador November 23 there is a need for a structure that defines every party's goals in Iraq and a system that works internally, regionally, and internationally. He offered his assessment of the primary interests of the three main Iraqi groups.

-- Sunni Arabs want a united Iraq with their efforts and interests protected. They would also like 1/3 power share with veto (like Lebanon), or even more, to rule again.  
-- Kurds want KRG autonomy, with relatively weak federal government, in which they still retain an allotment of positions.  
-- Shia want democracy (one man-one vote) with no return to dictatorship, but they are divided on the issue of federalism.

[¶3.](#) (C) According to Hammoudi, democracy in Iraq is not a system stacked against the Sunnis, as long as it excludes partitioning and prevents majority dominance. He stated that the Federation Council will protect regional and provincial interests (NOTE: The Federation Council is the implementation of Article 65 of the constitution, which states that "A legislative council shall be established named the 'Federation Council' to include representatives from the regions and the governorates not organized into regions." END NOTE). According to Hammoudi, the Federation Council would be structured on the German model (population-based representation), with a 2/3 vote on key national issues.

[¶4.](#) (C) Hammoudi agreed that a U.S. guarantee of a commitment to democracy in Iraq would help alleviate Shia and Kurdish concerns that dictatorship might return. He again stressed the importance of a united, democratic Iraq protective of human rights and not hostile to anyone. He said there should be an agreement among all parties and national leaders that they support this concept. Hammoudi added that there were discussions between Prime Minister Maliki and the Presidency

Council members that a national compact document should highlight the fact that there is a political front that supports the government and the government program and another front that doesn't agree with it and should be excluded.

15. (C) Hammoudi told the Ambassador that the goal is to build strong a government, with respect for the Constitution and the rule of law. If someone violates the law, they should be held accountable, whether they are inside or outside of the government. There needs to be a balance in the use of strength, not under the banner of militias, but under the banner of the state. The government should not be defined by the individual leaders and their supporters, but by its national unity character. If someone leaves the compact, they would not leave the alliance, but only the government. On the issue of the Constitution, Hammoudi said the Sunnis believe the Constitution is invalid since they voted against it. The Sunnis must be told that the building of the state and government does not stop and that the train will continue to move forward with its supporters. Everyone who cares for Iraq should respect the government and strengthen it to build a professional and fair government that doesn't distinguish between citizens.

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National Compact as Basis for Regional Compact  
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16. (C) Hammoudi said this national compact would then be the basis for a regional compact to support a unified Iraq not hostile to its neighbors. He offered his assessment of the different interests of Iraq's neighbors:

BAGHDAD 00004341 002 OF 002

-- Turkey wants a united Iraq, with Kirkuk remaining outside of Kurdistan and PKK dealt with by GOI.  
-- Saudi Arabia wants a united Iraq (not a Shia state) with an Arab identity that is not an enemy of the kingdom.  
-- Iran is indifferent on the unity of Iraq, as long as Iraq is not an enemy state. Iran wants strong economic and political relationships with Iraq. Democracy will help them with their goals due Shia majority in Iraq.  
-- Syria wants united Iraq, with a Baathist role in the political process. Syria does not want Iraq to be an enemy despite the relationship between itself and the U.S.  
--If Syria supports the initiative, then Saudi Arabia would also join. Hammoudi assessed that winning Saudi Arabia's support is more important (given its adversarial relationship with Iran).

17. (C) In pursuing its regional interests, Hammoudi argued, Iraq should not take sides on the U.S. foreign policy fight with Iran/Syria; The GOI needs to have regular meetings with its neighbors and portray itself as strong, not just begging for support.

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American Goal Should Be a Democratic, Stable Iraq with Positive Relations with the U.S.  
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17. (C) Hammoudi told the Ambassador that the goal for U.S. policy in Iraq should be a democratic, stable Iraq with positive relations with the U.S. (positive, but not necessarily always in agreement). A stable Iraq affects the economic situation, in which the U.S. has a major role. He said a strong GOI is in the interest of the USG. If the GOI is strong, neighbors will respect it; if weak, it will encourage neighbors to intervene.

18. (C) Hammoudi said this proposal will be presented to a meeting of the Shia Coalition this weekend and subsequently discussed with other blocs and ultimately presented to the Policy Council for National Security (PCNS).

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COMMENT  
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[¶9](#). (C) Shaykh Hammoudi's analysis of the interests of Iraq's main groups (Shia, Sunni, and Kurd) and his strategy for a national compact demonstrates that he (and possibly other Shia Coalition leaders) sees common ground between the groups and the tradeoffs needed to be made for the compact. It also shows his understanding of the regional perspective and the role Iraq's neighbors have in making the national compact succeed.

KHALILZAD